



Retailers

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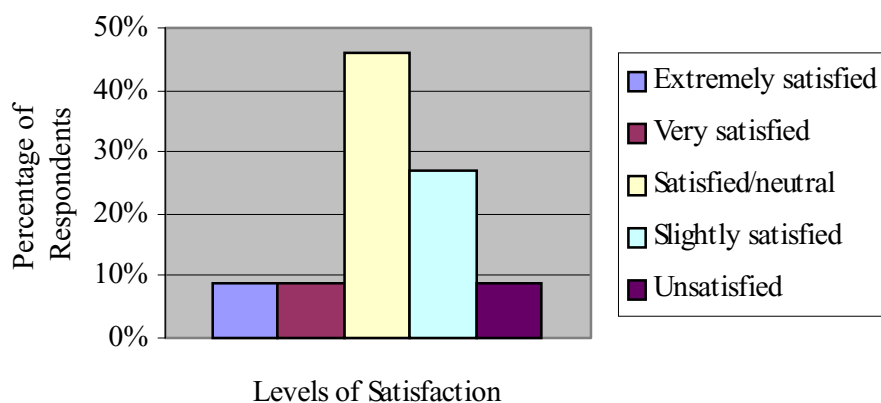
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News Just For

Retailers Report Results with Kentucky Collection

The progress of the Kentucky Collection (KC), a pilot project of the Kentucky Craft Marketing Program, has been documented this past summer by Kristin Palmgreen, an intern for the Kentucky Craft Marketing Program (KCMP) and a Master of Public Administration candidate from the Martin School of Public Policy & Administration at the University of Kentucky. Under the guidance of KCMP staff, Kris took on the daunting task of analyzing and bringing together all research gathered on the Kentucky Collection pilot, which is at the end of its trial/pilot stage. Measurement of the program was requested by the KCMP in order to understand program effectiveness as well as to serve as a guide for the program's next steps. Research instruments designed for 2004 comparison purposes were prepared to ensure consistency between 2003 and 2004 gathered data. Continued evaluation of the KC will be required to understand if the initiative is maintaining effectiveness for both craftspeople and retailers.

**July 2003 Questionnaire: Satisfaction with
Current Level of Retail Sales**



story continued inside front cover

Retailers Report Results, continued

The KC gives retailers an opportunity to profit from the sale of high quality Kentucky-made products which aids in the bolstering of support for state artisans and the craft industry. Eleven retail stores were selected as pilot stores. These stores order a "collection" of products that are offered through the KY Collection showroom. The products are then displayed for sale in each pilot store upon a uniquely designed kiosk, which is supplied by the KCMP upon the store's entry into the program. Data is obtained to understand each pilot store's business activities and needs, goals for improvement, and program suggestions. Survey information has been and will continue to be used to track changes resulting from participation in the program.

When KC pilot stores were asked to list the top KC sellers/products, 58 total products were reported. The average price of the 58 top sellers was \$19.88, with 60% of the top sellers being priced below \$19.88. The top seller prices ranged from \$1.50 to \$80.00. Products listed repeatedly by stores as top sellers (KC and non-KC products combined) include books, T-shirts, food products (jams & sauces), pottery, and baskets. While one store might report that note cards or baby blankets do not sell, another store lists these items as "best sellers." A possible explanation for this discrepancy is that each one of the pilot stores has a different clientele as a result of the nature of the store business (a bookstore versus a state park's gift shop versus a novelty-item store). Further, the location of each store makes an impact on what items are successfully sold.

Some of the top vendors for the Kentucky Collection include:

McClanahan Publishing
Ruth Hunt Candies
Bourbon Country Products Inclan Enterprises
Pottery Rowe
Churchill Weavers, Inc.
Clark Weber Foods (Sonia Lee's)
Elmwood Inn
Gastineau Jewelry
Handwoven Baskets by That Kentucky Lady
Old World Baskets
Plum Lick Publishing
Southern Delight Gourmet Foods, LLC
The Weavery
The Wooden Utensil Co.
University Press
Abby Glenn Design
Alley Cat Pottery
Kenny's Cajun Inc.
Patti's Enterprises, LLC

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Two thirds of KC storeowners are at least satisfied or neutral with the current level of general retail sales and with current level of KC sales. 45% report that business satisfaction level has increased though participation the KC program. The Kentucky Craft Marketing Program has no plans for expanding into new pilot stores at this time, but rather to continue with the eleven pilot stores and expand the Collection possibly to other Kentucky state parks in the coming year. For more information on The Kentucky Collection or any of the research reported on in this article, contact Nancy Atcher at 888-592-7238, ext. 4816 or email her at nancy.atcher@ky.gov.



CRAFTS IN FOCUS: NATURAL ACCENTS

"From the ground up" aptly describes how Sharon Haines creates her beautiful handcrafted home decor items using many of the materials grown on her and her husband's farm. She starts seedlings under lights in the basement in the winter, transfers them to a cold frame as the weather warms and then plants them in the gardens. Weeding, watering, harvesting, and preserving fill the rest of the growing season. Sharon air-dries many of the materials in the attic, barns and the basement. She also works with silica gel, glycerin, bleach, dyes, and a dehydrator. Every year Sharon tries at least five new types of plants and is always searching the fields and roadsides for interesting things to dry and use in her designer wreaths, baskets, and swags.

The wreath shown above was designed and created specifically for the August New York International Gift Fair where Sharon and six other juried participants were featured in the Craft Marketing Program's booth as part of an exciting and new product development initiative. This pilot project helps Kentucky craftspeople develop new products targeted specifically to demands in the marketplace. To learn more about Sharon's innovative designs, you can contact her at:

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TRENDS CORNER

If you're making up holiday gift lists, recent findings of the trend trackers may offer some guidance.

Lighten up on the figurines and the decorative plates. "Dustibles," as they are called, are losing favor, reports Pam Danzinger, president of Unity Marketing and author of **Why People Buy Things**. As people shift from nesting at home to connecting with people, they are turning away from clutter and decorative to utilitarian "real things," Danzinger says.

At the same time it's safe to give a St. Nicholas doll or holly-scented candles. Holiday decorations are on the rise. For the first time in three years, people are ready to embrace the spirit of the celebrations between Halloween through December, Danzinger writes.

Gifting prospects for 2004 also appear strong. The trend driving the growing gifting market is consumers' need to connect in meaningful, emotional ways with those they care about. After spending the past several years at home in their 'cocoons,' today's consumers are like butterflies emerging to seek to reconnect with the outside world. "They find new meaning in relationships that is often expressed through gifting," Danziger explains.

Buying gifts for family and friends accounts for roughly 10% of the nation's \$2.7 trillion consumer retail economy. Because gifting is a major reason to shop not just at Christmas, the trend is expected to continue throughout the year.

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MEET THE RETAILER:

KENTUCKY ARTISAN CENTER AT BEREA



While Frankfort might be the capitol city of Kentucky, it's own state legislature has acknowledged Berea as the "Folk Arts and Crafts Capitol" of the bluegrass state. Visible from Interstate -75 at Exit 77, the newly opened center was designed by Myers Jolly Architects in Lexington to serve as an example of Kentucky's top-quality artisantry. Though the 25,000 square foot facility appears to be a series of small buildings when viewed from the interstate, it in fact is one continuous building constructed of Kentucky limestone. Slate and copper roofs, and the interior's exposed timbers and decking further accentuate the natural feel of the building.

In all, the facility features over 5,000 sq. ft. of shopping and exhibit space filled with Kentucky crafts, paintings, music, publications, specialty foods, and travel information. A warm and inviting cafe includes dining areas that seat 195 people and features traditional Kentucky cuisine such as soup beans, turnip greens and corn pudding. An outdoor patio is open for dining in warm weather. The center, dedicated to showcasing the work of Kentucky's many outstanding artisans, is open daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. There is no admission charge.